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Identical letters dated 14 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 13 March 2001 from Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq. The Minister calls attention to the ongoing wanton aggression against Iraq by United States and British aircraft in the unlawful no-flight zones and to the fact that in the period from 23 to 27 February 2001 they carried out 143 sorties, 66 of them from Saudi Arabia and 77 from Kuwait.

The Minister reaffirms the Government of Iraq's condemnation of these acts of aggression against Iraqi territory, and he states that international responsibility for them must be borne by the United States of America, the United Kingdom and the countries that provide the logistic support for this aggression, namely Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Turkey. He urges you to perform the duties assigned to you under the Charter by halting this unwarranted aggression and ensuring that it does not recur.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammed A. **Al-Douri**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 14 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I should like to inform you that United States and British warplanes based in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have continued to violate the airspace of the Republic of Iraq. They carried out 143 sorties in the period from 23 to 27 February 2001, 66 of them from Saudi Arabia and 77 from Kuwait.

In the southern region 143 sorties were flown at speeds of 720 to 780 kilometres per hour and at altitudes of 9,000 to 13,000 metres, as follows:

(a) At 1245 hours on 23 February 2001, United States and British F-14, F-15, F-16, Tornado and EA-6B aircraft coming from Saudi and Kuwaiti territory penetrated Iraq's airspace in the southern region. They carried out 26 missions, 10 of them from Saudi territory with the support of an AWACS command and control aircraft operating inside Saudi airspace and 16 from the demilitarized zone between Iraq and Kuwait with the support of an E-2C command and control aircraft operating inside Kuwaiti airspace. They overflew the Basrah, Artawi, Nukhayb, Najaf, Karbala', Taqtaqanah, Kut, Nu'maniyah, Samawah, Walid air base, Maysan, Ukhaydir, Talhah West, kilometre-40, Rifa'i and Jalibah areas. Our air defences, acting in self-defence, engaged the aircraft and, at 1525 hours, drove them off.

(b) At 1220 hours on 24 February 2001, United States and British F-14, F-15, F-16, F-18, Tornado and EA-6B aircraft coming from Saudi and Kuwaiti territory penetrated Iraq's airspace in the southern region. They carried out 15 missions, eight of them from Saudi territory with the support of an AWACS command and control aircraft operating inside Saudi airspace and seven from the demilitarized zone with the support of an E-2C command and control aircraft operating inside Kuwaiti airspace. They overflew the Salman, Faw, Lasaf, Shinafiyah, Nasiriyah, Nukhayb, Taqtaqanah, Karbala', Jalibah, Diwaniyah, Mashkhab and Qal'at Salih areas. Our air defences, acting in self-defence, engaged the aircraft and, at 1400 hours, drove them off.

(c) At 0830 hours on 25 February 2001, United States and British F-14, F-15, F-16, F-18, Tornado and EA-6B aircraft coming from Saudi and Kuwaiti territory penetrated Iraq's airspace in the southern region. They carried out 32 missions, 16 of them from Saudi territory with the support of an AWACS command and control aircraft operating inside Saudi airspace and 16 from Kuwaiti territory by way of the demilitarized zone between Iraq and Kuwait with the support of an E-2C command and control aircraft operating inside Kuwaiti airspace. They overflew the Salman, Qal'at Salih, Jalibah, Artawi, Nasiriyah, Qurnah, Ashbajah, Shatrah, Rifa'i, Shinafiyah, Samawah, Lasaf, Diwaniyah, Taqtaqanah, Basrah and Busayyah areas. Our air defences, acting in self-defence, engaged the aircraft and, at 1420 hours, drove them off.

(d) At 0810 hours on 26 February 2001, United States and British F-14, F-15, F-18, Tornado and EA-6B aircraft coming from Saudi and Kuwaiti territory penetrated Iraq's airspace in the southern region. They carried out 40 missions, 18 of them from Saudi territory with the support of an AWACS command and control aircraft operating inside Saudi airspace and 22 from the demilitarized zone between Iraq and Kuwait with the support of an E-2C command and control aircraft operating inside Kuwaiti airspace. They overflew the Nasiriyah, Samawah, Salman,

Basrah, Qurnah, Amarah, Najaf, Hayy, Diwaniyah, Jalibah, Artawi and Lasaf areas. Our air defences, acting in self-defence, engaged the aircraft and, at 1545 hours, drove them off.

(e) At 1450 hours on 27 February 2001, United States and British F-14, F-15, F-16, F-18, Tornado and EA-6B aircraft coming from Saudi and Kuwaiti territory penetrated Iraq's airspace in the southern region. They carried out 30 missions, 14 of them from Saudi territory with the support of an AWACS command and control aircraft operating inside Saudi airspace and 16 from the demilitarized zone between Iraq and Kuwait with the support of an E-2C command and control aircraft operating inside Kuwaiti airspace. They overflew the Basrah, Qurnah, Nasiriyah, Samawah, Artawi, Jalibah, Lasaf, Ashbajah, Shatrah and Rumaythah areas. Our air defences, acting in self-defence, engaged the aircraft and, at 1655 hours, drove them off.

This aggression illustrates the bellicose attitude being maintained by the United States of America and the United Kingdom towards Iraq. Since 1992, it has become a fixed policy aimed at undermining the country's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and at the systematic and concerted destruction of Iraqi lives, infrastructure and civilian installations. It is a policy that has been affirmed in successive statements made by United States and British officials.

The Government of Iraq categorically rejects the two so-called no-flight zones, which were imposed by unilateral decision of the United States and the United Kingdom and lack any legal basis. Iraq rejects all the consequences of this illegal decision and, in particular, the flimsy excuses and pretexts used by these States in an attempt to justify their military aggression against our country.

The logistic support provided by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Turkey to the Americans and the British has made these countries key partners in the aggression being committed against Iraq, so that they bear full international responsibility under international law. This includes liability for full compensation for the loss and damage, in both human and material terms, that is caused by these illegal practices.

The Government of Iraq further renews its call to the countries participating in this aggression to desist forthwith from internationally prohibited acts that violate Iraq's sovereignty, place its security and integrity in grave danger and pose a direct and serious threat to international peace and security.

As it condemns these acts of aggression against Iraqi targets and installations, the Government of Iraq urges you to perform the duties assigned to you under the Charter as they relate to the maintenance of international peace and security by intervening with the governments of the countries in question with a view to inducing them to halt, end and desist from any resumption of their constant and unwarranted aggression against an independent, sovereign State.

(*Signed*) Tariq **Aziz**
Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs

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Ninth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 22 of its resolution 1289 (2000) of 7 February 2000, the Security Council requested me to report on a regular basis on security conditions on the ground in Sierra Leone, so that troop levels and the tasks to be performed by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) could be kept under review. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request and covers developments in Sierra Leone and the subregion since my eighth report on UNAMSIL, issued on 15 December 2000 (S/2000/1199).

2. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 1334 (2000) of 22 December 2000, the Security Council commended my efforts to seek further firm commitments of troops for UNAMSIL and urged all States in a position to do so to consider contributing peacekeeping forces to the Mission. In that resolution the Security Council also expressed its intention, following consultations with troop-contributing countries, to respond promptly to any additional specific recommendations on the force strength and tasks of UNAMSIL. This report, therefore, also describes the Mission's revised concept of operations, its deployment plans for the near future and the progress made in seeking commitments from States to make military personnel and equipment available for UNAMSIL.

II. Political developments

Implementation of the Abuja Agreement

3. During the reporting period, UNAMSIL continued its contacts with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the Government to follow-up on the implementation of the Abuja Agreement of 10 November 2000 (see S/2000/1091). Since my last report, the Force Commander, Lieutenant General Daniel Opande, has held several meetings with the RUF interim leader, Issa Sesay, in Makeni and maintained regular radio and telephone contact with his headquarters. My Special Representative, Oluyemi Adeniji, had discussions with the RUF leader by telephone and also maintained indirect contacts with him. Low-level contacts continued between UNAMSIL patrols and RUF ground commanders.

4. In all these contacts, UNAMSIL continued to remind RUF of its obligations under the Abuja Agreement and discussed predominantly military issues with the rebel group. In particular, UNAMSIL pressed RUF to return the weapons seized from some UNAMSIL contingents in May 2000, to reopen the long-closed roads and to facilitate free movement of people and goods in RUF-held areas. UNAMSIL also urged RUF to disengage from the conflict at Sierra Leone's border with Guinea, to embark upon the disarmament and demobilization of its fighters, and to accept the deployment of Government officials.

5. Those contacts have yielded some important results. RUF has reopened several important roads, including the Makeni-Kabala, Kambia-Mange-Port Loko, Bumbuna-Magburaka, and Kenema-Daru roads. UNAMSIL has also been able to carry out routine patrols, as well as periodic robust long-range patrols, along some of the reopened routes. RUF also agreed to open roads which were deliberately damaged by them during the events of May 2000, and they are cooperating in arrangements to repair some of those roads. The RUF leadership has invited UNAMSIL to deploy peacekeepers and observers in Kambia, Lunsar

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and Makeni. In the course of their meetings, UNAMSIL and RUF have set up several contact groups whose primary purpose is to enhance the flow of information, facilitate the movement of UNAMSIL and follow up on all aspects of the implementation of the Abuja Agreement. A core contact group started its meetings in January and regional contact groups have become operational at Daru, Kenema, Mange and Mile 91.

6. So far, RUF have returned to UNAMSIL 56 personal weapons, 10 vehicles, and 20 armoured personnel carriers, which were part of the weapons and equipment seized by RUF from UNAMSIL contingents last year. However, those vehicles and armoured personnel carriers had been completely stripped of weapons and equipment and were not in a usable condition. Mr. Sesay has indicated that the remaining six UNAMSIL armoured personnel carriers have been assembled at Lunsar and Kailahun for collection by UNAMSIL, and that efforts would continue to be made to collect the remaining weapons. RUF has also pledged to assist in locating and exhuming the remains of UNAMSIL personnel killed during the events of May 2000. In this regard, UNAMSIL is making arrangements for the early exhumation and repatriation of the remains, which are believed to be located near Makeni.

Prospects for political dialogue

7. The Government of Sierra Leone has established its own indirect contacts with RUF, primarily through traditional leaders and relatives. However, the slow pace at which RUF is implementing aspects of the Abuja Agreement, which were intended to build confidence and pave the way for a political dialogue, has not helped to remove the deep apprehension about the rebels' intentions.

8. In its contacts with UNAMSIL and through public statements, the RUF leadership has continued to indicate that the rebel movement will not disarm unless the present Government is replaced by an inclusive interim government when its term of office expires on 28 March. They have also demanded that both the Sierra Leone Army and the Civil Defence Force be disarmed and that imprisoned RUF leaders be released. Senior members of RUF also appear to have concerns about their personal futures, in particular with regard to the possibility of their prosecution by the Government.

9. On the other hand, some regional government officials took steps to restrict movement on the roads that RUF had agreed to open for free movement of persons and goods. In response, RUF threatened to close the recently reopened roads. The Government of Sierra Leone indicated to my Special Representative that these restrictions were aimed at minimizing the flow of supplies to RUF. However, following discussions with UNAMSIL, the Government undertook to lift the restrictions so as to ensure that the population in RUF-controlled areas would not continue to suffer. RUF has also complained that Government forces are deploying too close to its lines of control.

10. Against a background of general frustration with the delays in the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, there have been periodic calls by some senior Government officials, parliamentarians, and sections of Sierra Leonean civil society for UNAMSIL, some elements of the Sierra Leone Army and the Civil Defence Force to launch offensive operations. In this regard, UNAMSIL was obliged to call for restraint in order to build confidence and to allow a political dialogue to start.

11. Recently, the RUF leadership appeared to have begun setting up its political wing. They have invited a RUF legal adviser and spokesman, Omrie Golley, to lead a Political and Peace Council, which would be established in Freetown. Mr. Golley, who is expected in Freetown, has said the Council will initiate discussions with the Government aimed at resuming the peace process based on the Lomé Agreement.

12. On 3 March, President Kabbah announced a number of changes in his cabinet, which were mainly designed to fill the post of the departing Minister of Finance, as well as to fill the vacant posts which had previously been occupied by members of RUF prior to their arrest after the crisis of May 2000. As a result, three senior cabinet positions have now been accorded to members of the opposition in Parliament. RUF, which remains excluded from government, has criticized these appointments and reaffirmed that RUF will not disarm unless a government of national unity is formed.

Electoral issues

13. According to the Constitution of Sierra Leone, the five-year term of office of the President will expire on 28 March 2001. Similarly, the term of the

Parliament will expire on 1 April 2001. Consequently, presidential elections were due in February 2001 and parliamentary elections in May 2001. On 26 January, the President submitted two proposals to Parliament in which he recommended, in accordance with the Constitution, that his term of office and the term of Parliament be extended by six months, citing the current state of emergency and the prevailing security situation. On 13 February, a special sitting of Parliament unanimously extended the term of office of both the executive and the legislative branches of Government. On 8 March, the Parliament also extended the state of emergency in the country.

14. Parliament agreed to the extension of the Government's term with the proviso that the Government should work, during the six-month period, towards accelerating the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme for all combatants, with the exception of the Sierra Leone Army; repatriating and resettling refugees and internally displaced persons; extending Government authority to all RUF-held areas; and preparing for the holding of free, fair and transparent elections. Parliamentarians stressed that, should RUF refuse to relinquish control of the areas they currently hold, the Government should issue an ultimatum and take action to engage the rebel movement. Meanwhile, the Sierra Leone Electoral Commission has initiated planning in close collaboration with the Commonwealth constitutional experts and an electoral expert from Ghana.

15. The Electoral Commission has completed its strategic plan and timetable for the parliamentary and presidential elections. The plan envisages the holding of both elections by 31 December 2001. However, there appears to be consensus both among Sierra Leoneans and in the international community that free and fair elections will not be possible until the necessary security conditions are in place and the Government has fully extended its authority throughout the country. One of several crucial conditions in this regard is that both RUF and the Civil Defence Force disarm and demobilize in a credible manner. In addition, there would be a need for the support of all major actors and for an intensive public information campaign.

16. The Electoral Commission will also need to address several crucial issues, including the choice of an electoral system; a review of the electoral law; restructuring of constituency boundaries and polling stations; registration of voters and printing of the electoral roll; and mobilization of logistical and financial support. UNAMSIL has maintained regular contacts with the Electoral Commission and is carrying out contingency planning for an expanded role in supporting the preparations and conduct of the elections in due course. Pending the outcome of an electoral assessment mission, which I intend to send to Sierra Leone shortly, I believe that such an expanded role for UNAMSIL may require the establishment of a special electoral component in UNAMSIL. Such a component would, among other things, provide assistance to the Electoral Commission through technical advice, mobilization of logistical and financial support and civic education. At present, one electoral officer is assigned to the Civil Affairs Section of UNAMSIL.

III. Military and security situation

17. During the reporting period, the ceasefire continued to hold in the country and the military and security situation remained relatively calm. However, UNAMSIL continued to receive reports of fighting at the border areas with Guinea, and of the Guinean military operations against RUF positions in the Kambia district in response to rebel attacks across the border. Attempts by the Sierra Leone Army to move towards RUF positions in the area of Mange Bridge also created some tensions locally.

18. In the meantime, the Sierra Leone Army continues its training and restructuring programme. The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has indicated that it will extend its short-term training assistance scheme to September 2001. Following their initial training, Sierra Leone Army troops have also begun to deploy to the countryside. The Sierra Leone Army brigade that was deployed in the Lungi area has been reassigned to the Masiaka area. Lungi was then garrisoned with a smaller force.

19. It is important to continue to enhance coordination between UNAMSIL and the Sierra Leone Army. UNAMSIL maintains liaison with the Sierra Leone Army and the United Kingdom Task Force through daily briefings and a fortnightly meeting of the Sierra Leone Army Chief of Defence Staff, the Deputy Defence Minister and Civil Defence Force coordinator, the UNAMSIL Force Commander and Deputy Force

Commander, and the United Kingdom Task Force Commander. As a result of these contacts, it is expected that the Sierra Leone Army will gradually take over security responsibilities from UNAMSIL in areas under Government control. UNAMSIL has also set up a liaison mechanism to avoid any security risks to UNAMSIL as a result of Guinean army activities, especially in the Kambia and Kailahun districts.

20. As a result of the gradual improvement in the security situation throughout the country, the Government has further reduced the curfew hours by one hour. UNAMSIL has also considerably reduced the number of its checkpoints in Freetown and has increased the frequency of night patrols along key streets. While the rebel threat to Freetown is now remote, the rising crime rate, in particular armed robberies, is becoming a serious source of insecurity.

21. At the same time, some incidents of extortion at Civil Defence Force checkpoints continued to be reported. A serious incident occurred at Moyamba Junction when Civil Defence Force combatants forcibly seized from troops of the Guinean contingent a box of ammunition that had been previously confiscated during a search on a civilian vehicle. During the incident, Civil Defence Force elements threatened to use their weapons against the peacekeepers. It should be noted that the Civil Defence Force is currently being reorganized, and the restructuring exercise may have resulted in internal divisions, which could create further difficulties.

IV. Regional aspects

22. During the reporting period, fighting in the areas along Sierra Leone's border with Guinea escalated, in particular in January 2001. In response to cross-border attacks, Guinean forces intensified shelling and launched helicopter gunship attacks on suspected RUF positions deep inside Sierra Leone in the Kambia and Rokupr areas, causing civilian casualties and significant flows of internally displaced persons. UNAMSIL received reports of recruitment, for fighting in Guinea, by RUF in the Koinadugu area. RUF was also reported to mobilize troops and vehicles on the main routes into Guinea east of Kabala and in the Koindu area. There have also been reports of incursions by armed elements into Liberia. The Government of Liberia is accusing Guinea of providing support to these armed elements.

23. The Government of Sierra Leone has expressed concern about the loss of lives and property of the civilian population as a result of this military activity. A joint Guinea-Sierra Leone military body has, therefore, been set up to ensure that Guinean forces avoid causing civilian casualties during their military operations against RUF positions. I welcome this initiative and urge that all involved exercise restraint in order to avoid any suffering on the part of the civilian population.

24. In an effort to arrest further escalation of the conflict at Guinea's borders with Sierra Leone and Liberia, I instructed my Special Representative to meet with the leaders of Guinea and Liberia, and with the Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to convey the concern of the Security Council at the widening crisis. Consequently, Mr. Adeniji met with the President of Guinea, Lansana Conteh, on 13 December 2000, and urged him to use the opportunity of the twenty-fourth summit meeting of ECOWAS on 15 and 16 December 2000 in Bamako to pursue a dialogue with the President of Liberia, Charles Taylor. President Conteh, however, did not attend the summit meeting. On 15 December, my Special Representative met with President Taylor and urged him to take urgent steps to end the escalating conflict. He also called upon the President of Liberia to cooperate with ECOWAS in finding a solution. On 4 January, my Special Representative met with the Chairman of ECOWAS, President Oumar Alpha Konare of Mali, who informed him that Presidents Conteh and Taylor had accepted the idea of a mini-summit to address the conflict at the border, and that Guinean authorities had expressed their readiness to allow the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to relocate refugees trapped in transit camps inside Guinea before their repatriation. Unfortunately, the mini-summit has not been held and relations between Guinea and Liberia continue to be difficult.

25. On 16 December 2000, ECOWAS decided to deploy an interposition force of 1,796 troops along the Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia borders. The proposed mandate of the force would include monitoring the border areas; neutralizing irregular armed groups; facilitating the movement of persons, goods and services; ensuring the security of refugees and displaced persons; and creating a conducive environment for humanitarian assistance. The

envisaged force will obviously require substantial and sustained support by the international community. The United Nations Secretariat will continue to provide technical expertise in the planning of the ECOWAS force, if requested.

26. ECOWAS is currently discussing status-of-forces agreements with both Guinea and Liberia. While Liberia has indicated that it will accept the deployment of the interposition force on its territory, Guinea previously stated that it would not be ready to accept the deployment of the force unless the Security Council imposed sanctions on Liberia. In any event, it will be necessary to develop viable and comprehensive options to deal with the serious security issues in the subregion.

27. Under increasing pressure from the international community, the Government of Liberia on 12 January publicly renounced its support for RUF and called on RUF to lay down its arms. In what it called a policy of "disengagement", the Government of Liberia also announced the expulsion from Liberia of former RUF field commander Sam Bockarie, and all persons associated with RUF. Shortly after that, the Government of Sierra Leone sent a letter to President Taylor requesting the extradition of Bockarie. However, on 7 February, Liberia claimed that Bockarie had left Liberia and that the RUF liaison office in Monrovia had been formally closed. Bockarie's present whereabouts are unknown.

28. The Security Council, through its resolution 1343 (2001) of 7 March, has outlined the specific steps that the Government of Liberia must take with a view to ending its support for RUF and other armed rebel groups in the region. These steps, if taken in good faith, could lead to further progress in the peace process in Sierra Leone. In response to the Security Council's decision, the Government of Liberia announced on 7 March that it had revoked the registration of all aircraft under the Liberian flag, dismissed its director of civil aviation, and ordered the Liberian Central Bank to withhold diamond export permits for 120 days, to allow the Liberian authorities to put in place a certificate of origin scheme.

29. The intensified fighting at the borders of Guinea has further heightened international concern about the fate of Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees in these areas. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Ruud Lubbers, visited the subregion from 11 to 19 February, to discuss arrangements for access to the affected refugees, and the creation of conditions for their repatriation. I have forwarded to the Security Council the High Commissioner's findings and recommendations, which he also discussed at the Security Council's meeting of 8 March. At present, the priorities of UNHCR are to seek access to refugees and to relocate them to areas of relative safety within Guinea, while at the same time seeking the necessary commitments from the Governments involved, as well as RUF, to allow a safe return of refugees to Sierra Leone in due course. UNHCR has also re-emphasized that any repatriation movement has to be based, first and foremost, on the informed choice and free will of the refugees themselves.

30. Following several meetings with UNHCR, the Secretariat and UNAMSIL are carefully considering the various options for the return of refugees from Guinea to Sierra Leone, including the possibility of a repatriation by road from Guinea through the Kambia district. UNHCR plans to count those refugees who might express a wish to avail themselves of this option as soon as conditions allow. However, a large-scale return, which could place an additional strain on Sierra Leone's infrastructure, is not likely to occur in the immediate future. For the time being, UNAMSIL would continue to deploy in accordance with its concept of operations, which should result in larger areas inside Sierra Leone becoming accessible for a return of refugees and internally displaced persons. The present concept of operations also envisages, subject to the availability of troops, a deployment to key border areas which could facilitate the return of refugees.

Coordination with ECOWAS and other key players

31. According to the Abuja Agreement, the Government of Sierra Leone, RUF, ECOWAS and the United Nations were expected to conduct a review meeting 30 days after the entry into force of the Agreement. In this regard, my Special Representative advised the Ministerial Meeting of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council held at Bamako on 14 December, that, before a review could take place, more time was needed to allow UNAMSIL to test the commitment of RUF to fulfilling its obligations under the Ceasefire Agreement. The Ministers took note of the advice and stressed the need for UNAMSIL to deploy throughout the country in order to facilitate

effective implementation of the Abuja Agreement. The Ministers' decision was endorsed by the ECOWAS heads of State during their summit meeting at Bamako on 15 and 16 December.

32. My Special Representative has maintained regular contacts with the leadership and members of ECOWAS. ECOWAS has also appointed Colonel Mohamane Toure of Mali as its Special Representative for Sierra Leone, which would further enhance its cooperation with the United Nations. It is hoped that Colonel Toure will soon establish his office in Freetown.

33. As the Security Council may be aware, I have sent an inter-agency mission to West Africa, from 8 to 26 March, whose primary objective is to take stock of the priority needs and challenges in West Africa and make recommendations on a coordinated United Nations response to the multifaceted problems confronting the region, taking into account initiatives already under way or being proposed by the various actors. The inter-agency mission will include various United Nations departments, agencies and programmes. A representative of ECOWAS will also participate in the mission.

V. Activities and status of the Mission

Military deployment

34. The military strength of UNAMSIL as at 14 March stood at 10,356 personnel (see annex). The relief of the Indian and Jordanian contingents was completed on 14 February 2001. The advance party of a third battalion from Bangladesh arrived in the mission area in mid-February and the main body and support units began to arrive on 9 March. The expected arrival of a Ukrainian Aviation Unit will also add military capability to the force. The Ukrainian Maintenance and Training Battalion is already in Sierra Leone and has begun training various contingents on the operation of armoured personnel carriers and other vehicles. After the arrival of these reinforcements, it is expected that the Mission's strength will reach about 12,700 military personnel by the end of March.

35. UNAMSIL and the Secretariat in New York have renewed their effort to ensure the required logistical support through the means at the disposal of the troop-contributing countries, contractual arrangements and United Nations-owned resources. Special attention is being paid to the effectiveness of the resources provided to the system of contingent-owned equipment, self-sustainment and contractual support. The Secretariat is discussing these issues both with UNAMSIL and in New York, and is also studying ways and means to ensure transfer to, and use of, support capability belonging to third countries by some of the current troop contributors.

36. With the recent induction of additional troops, UNAMSIL has consolidated its presence in the south and west of the country with positions at Lungi, Port Loko, Rogberi Junction, Freetown, Hastings, Masiaka, Bo, Moyamba, Mile 91, Kenema, Joru and Daru (see map). UNAMSIL has also begun robust patrolling into RUF-controlled areas, as well as preparations for further forward deployment. At the same time, UNAMSIL has continued to strengthen its internal cohesion and command structure.

37. During the reporting period, teams of military observers conducted regular meetings with RUF, in particular teams at Port Loko, Moyamba, Mile 91, Kenema and Daru. Those meetings were held under the protection of United Nations troops. Most of the teams were also active in promoting the disarmament and demobilization process. There are currently 244 military observers in UNAMSIL, but the planned resumption of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities will require that this number is restored to its authorized level of 260 personnel.

Civilian police

38. The activities of the UNAMSIL civilian police component continued to focus on providing advice to the Sierra Leone police force, assisting in the selection of new recruits, training, and providing technical advice in the restructuring of the police force. With the assistance of UNAMSIL police advisers and the Commonwealth team, a new regional police training school was opened at Kenema in the Eastern Province. The opening of another regional school at Bo is being explored. United Nations civilian police advisers have also proposed projects intended to improve the conditions of service of the local police to be financed from the United Nations Trust Fund for Sierra Leone. These include a police post near Kissy in the western area of Freetown, refurbishment of a police station at Daru, rebuilding of a police post at Rogberi Junction and the repair of the Central Police Station facilities in Freetown.

39. United Nations police advisers in the Freetown area are engaged in a broad range of activities, including monitoring prisons, liaison with Sierra Leone police headquarters, training of personnel on security matters during the elections and the attachment of advisers to police divisions in the Freetown area. It would be my intention to bring the number of United Nations civilian police advisers to its authorized strength of 60 civilian police advisers in order to address the need to deploy civilian United Nations police officers to additional areas throughout Sierra Leone as security conditions improve. The current strength of the civilian police component is 33 civilian personnel.

Civil affairs

40. UNAMSIL has continued to work with the authorities in the efforts to extend civil authority to all areas under the Government's control. It is important to note that, even where UNAMSIL is deployed, including the Western Area, the Southern Province, and parts of the Eastern and Northern Provinces, complete civil administration is still lacking. Besides security concerns, the Government continues to cite the lack of resources as the main factor preventing it from fully establishing civil administration in these areas.

41. As outlined above, the UNAMSIL deployment throughout the country is undertaken for the principal purpose of facilitating the return of normalcy and extension of the authority of the Government. A task force for the restoration of civil authority, under the chairmanship of Vice-President Albert Joe Demby, met for the first time this year on 22 February to discuss preparations for deployment of government officials to new territories, once UNAMSIL deploys forward. It has since instituted weekly meetings, in which UNAMSIL participates. I would like to encourage the Government to develop and implement, with the assistance of the international community, a comprehensive plan for the extension of its institutions throughout Sierra Leone immediately in the wake of UNAMSIL deployment.

42. The election of Paramount Chiefs in the Southern Province districts of Bo, Pujehun, Moyamba and Bonthe is expected to take place between late March and mid-April 2001. The modalities of these elections have been worked out with the support of the United Kingdom Government. Elections are to be held in other chiefdoms, especially in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, once the security situation permits.

43. During the reporting period, UNAMSIL deployed its civil affairs officers to the Northern, Eastern and Southern Provinces and the Western Area. They have initiated contacts with existing local authorities, non-governmental organizations, donor agencies and other groups on the ground. The provision of resources for the functioning of local and traditional authority structures would greatly facilitate efforts to assist the Government in the extension of its authority throughout the country. Civil affairs officers would also be prepared to provide assistance to the Government in the implementation of reintegration projects for ex-combatants.

Human rights concerns

44. The already fragile human rights situation in Sierra Leone has been exacerbated by cross-border rebel attacks into Guinea and, in turn, by retaliatory shelling and cross-border attacks by the Guinean army. The internally displaced people who fled the attacks reported human rights violations committed by RUF as well as by Guinean military personnel, who allegedly looted and burnt villages, and abducted men they considered to be RUF members or sympathizers.

45. Reports continue to be received about RUF allegedly harassing civilians and forcibly recruiting both adults and children for fighting and forced labour. UNAMSIL also continues to investigate any allegations of human rights abuses committed by other military groups, including the Sierra Leone Army and the Civil Defence Force.

46. Approximately 280 persons, mostly RUF and members of other armed groups, remain detained in "safe custody" without charge under emergency powers declared by the Government. The conditions of detention are monitored by UNAMSIL and, since January 2001, by the International Committee of the Red Cross. Conditions in Freetown Central Prison at Pademba Road have been assessed by UNAMSIL as not fully satisfactory but there has been no evidence of physical mistreatment of the detainees. However, the detainees have not been informed of their legal status, nor have they had access to legal advice.

47. During December, UNAMSIL and its national non-governmental organization partners conducted pilot human rights training with the newly trained

Sierra Leone Army. Regular induction training on human rights for United Nations peacekeepers and military observers also continues. The Mission is currently making an assessment of ways to extend training to prison officials.

Protection of women and children

48. The fieldwork phase of a data-gathering project on the incidence and effects of war-related sexual violence against women and girls in Sierra Leone commenced in January 2001. UNAMSIL, working with a team from the non-governmental organization Physicians for Human Rights and local researchers, will be gathering information from women and girls in camps of internally displaced persons across the country to determine the scope of sexual violence against women and girls. The data will be used to advocate for better protection and programming on the ground. Where appropriate, the information may also be shared with the Truth and Reconciliation Committee and the proposed Special Court.

49. Dependants of ex-combatants remain a vulnerable group requiring enhanced protection and support through the reintegration process. This matter was raised in the World Bank's review of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. UNAMSIL is discussing with the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, the National Commission for Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction and potential implementing agencies how the immediate and longer-term protection and assistance needs of this vulnerable group can be met.

50. UNHCR, working closely with the child protection agencies, has stationed personnel at Lungi, camps of internally displaced persons, and in some border towns to undertake registration of children and process requests from families to trace lost children. Potential child protection issues, including unaccompanied children, young people who are heads of families, child ex-combatants, and single parent families are being addressed in this process.

51. Following some allegations of abuse of women and minors involving United Nations personnel, UNAMSIL has initiated thorough investigations in all areas where peacekeepers are currently deployed. The investigations are carried out in collaboration with child protection personnel. So far, no allegations of abuse have been proved. However, the investigations will be pursued vigorously and any substantiated case will involve immediate disciplinary action. Meanwhile, UNAMSIL continues to sensitize all of its personnel to the special protection needs of women and children, as well as to the need to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Human Rights Commission

52. A number of initiatives to prepare for the early establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are currently under way. My Special Representative has invited applications for the four national members of the Commission and will forward his recommendations to the President of Sierra Leone, as envisaged in the statute of the Commission. Simultaneously, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has begun the search for the three international Commissioners, and has stepped up its support to the Commission to take into account the process leading to the establishment of the Special Court. Together with UNICEF, UNAMSIL is studying appropriate methods by which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission can ensure the appropriate protection of children as victims, witnesses and perpetrators. The relationship between the Commission and the Special Court, including matters such as the collection and use of evidence, witness protection and public awareness campaigns, will be discussed at a round-table meeting involving UNAMSIL, the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Government of Sierra Leone, international experts and civil society, to be convened in the near future. A research project on traditional forms of conflict resolution and reconciliation in Sierra Leone has also begun. In conjunction with Sierra Leonean civil society, a public awareness programme has commenced, utilizing, among other things, Radio UNAMSIL.

53. On 16 and 17 December 2000, UNAMSIL organized a consultative workshop on the proposed national Human Rights Commission, at which the Attorney-General introduced a draft of the required legislation, which was discussed at length by 40 invited participants representing the Government, civil society, the judiciary, the legal profession, the media and the different regions of the country. At the conclusion of the workshop, a consultative group was formed to

complete a commentary for the Government on the draft founding statute. The group, which includes UNAMSIL, has met twice and will make a report shortly to the Attorney-General, following consultations with the Special Adviser to the High Commissioner for Human Rights on national institutions.

54. Following the submission of the report by the Secretary-General on the establishment of a Special Court for Sierra Leone (S/2000/915), letters were exchanged between the Security Council and the Secretary-General which led to modifications in the texts of both the draft Agreement with the Government of Sierra Leone and the draft statute of the Court (S/2000/1234, S/2001/40 and S/2001/95). The Government of Sierra Leone has been consulted on these changes and, by a letter dated 9 February 2001, has conveyed to the Legal Counsel of the United Nations its willingness to accept these texts. Since its establishment and operations would depend on the availability of significant financial resources, I will shortly issue an appeal to all States to contribute to the funding of the operation of the Special Court.

Public information

55. Since my last report, UNAMSIL has strengthened its capacity to disseminate information designed to enhance the peace process. The Mission is implementing an information strategy to increase public understanding of its mandate, as well as activities under the revised concept of operations, which is described in section VI below. The central theme of the strategy is to project the efforts of the Mission's civilian and military components in facilitating the peace process in Sierra Leone, spotlighting ongoing operations as well as achievements of the Mission, to help mould public support for UNAMSIL and the peace process. UNAMSIL will also closely liaise with the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration and make its outlets available for information and sensitization efforts to promote the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, particularly bearing in mind the high degree of illiteracy in the country.

56. In addition to regular outreach to the population, UNAMSIL intends to initiate closer interactions with teachers, young people, lawyers, labour unions, traders, and other local groups. UNAMSIL is also improving its interactions with the local and international media by providing regular briefings, as well as visits to areas where peacekeepers are deployed outside Freetown.

VI. Concept of operations

57. UNAMSIL has revised its concept of operations, as presented in my sixth report (S/2000/832 of 24 August 2000), to take into account the Abuja Ceasefire Agreement, the changes in the Mission's military structure and the circumstances on the ground. Troop contributors have been consulted on this revised concept during several meetings with the Secretariat.

58. The main objectives of UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone remain to assist the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to extend its authority, restore law and order and stabilize the situation progressively throughout the entire country, and to assist in the promotion of a political process which should lead to a renewed disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and the holding, in due course, of free and fair elections.

59. The Mission's updated concept of operations integrates military and civilian aspects and envisages the deployment, in successive phases, into RUF-controlled areas of UNAMSIL troops, United Nations civil affairs, civilian police and human rights personnel, representatives of humanitarian agencies, and government personnel and assets to establish and consolidate State authority and basic services in these areas. It is clear that the success of this concept will very much depend on the availability of United Nations military resources and, in equal measure, on the extent to which these mutually reinforcing efforts are coordinated between the actors involved.

60. In its movement and deployment forward, UNAMSIL will continue to project the necessary military strength and determination to deter any attempt to use force against the United Nations and its mandate in Sierra Leone. The Mission's rules of engagement allow it to respond robustly to any attack or threat of attack, including, if necessary, in a pre-emptive manner. UNAMSIL military contingents continue to receive training in the application of these rules in order to ensure their uniform application.

61. The forward deployment of UNAMSIL would be carried out in stages, which are closely linked to the arrival and deployment of additional troops. In the first

stage, which is currently under way, UNAMSIL is expanding its area of operations by conducting long-range robust patrols into RUF-controlled areas. Such patrols have reached Makeni in the north and Bendu Junction in the east, and have also included overnight stays by United Nations troops in the Makeni area. In addition to routine patrols, UNAMSIL is aiming to carry out two company-sized patrols per battalion per week. The robust patrols will remain an essential element of the concept of operations and will gradually be expanded to cover the entire country. In addition to increased patrolling, UNAMSIL will continue to maintain liaison and contact with RUF at appropriate levels across all sectors. The Mission will also continue to conduct community projects, including small engineering tasks to be carried out in conjunction with extended patrols.

62. Upon the arrival of significant reinforcements provided by the third battalion and support units from Bangladesh, it is expected that UNAMSIL will possess the military capacity to enter the second stage of forward deployment by expanding its permanent presence to Lunsar, Magburaka, Makeni, Yele and Mano Junction. This deployment, which is expected to commence in mid-March, would ensure freedom of movement along the East/West supply routes and would also create the necessary conditions for the resumption of organized disarmament and demobilization by ex-combatants. At the same time, patrolling will continue towards and into Bumbuna, Kabala and Kambia districts and Kailahun. UNAMSIL has made clear that it expects RUF to dismantle its checkpoints and prepare for disarmament, since the Mission and, subsequently, the Government would assume responsibility for security in these areas.

63. In the third stage, subject to the availability of troops and further consultations with troop-contributing countries, UNAMSIL would deploy further forward to the diamond producing regions and to some border areas. It is expected that this deployment could provide the necessary security for the orderly conduct of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in those locations, the extension of government authority and basic services, and serve as an additional incentive for the return of refugees to Sierra Leone.

64. At the next stage, UNAMSIL may need to establish a presence at all key towns and areas across the territory of Sierra Leone to create the necessary conditions for the holding of elections. However, it would be too early to determine whether such an expansion of the UNAMSIL area of deployment would require additional troops. I intend to keep the security, political and humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone and in the subregion under close review and to revert to the Security Council with recommendations regarding the appropriate strength of UNAMSIL. I also intend to closely consult troop contributors at all stages of this process.

65. Since my previous report, I have continued efforts to seek the urgently needed contribution to UNAMSIL of additional well-trained and well-equipped troops. Several potential troop contributors have expressed their strong interest in participating in providing troops and other military resources for service with UNAMSIL and several of them have dispatched reconnaissance teams to the Mission. The Secretariat is in discussion with these and other Member States with regard to the modalities of their participation, and I hope that these discussions can be concluded very soon. When such new contingents have deployed to Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL's total military strength would reach a level of approximately 17,500 troops.

66. The military capacity corresponding to this level would enable UNAMSIL to make significant progress in its forward deployment, in particular to the diamond producing areas. As I indicated in my previous reports, to adequately discharge the tasks as identified by the Security Council in its resolution 1313 (2000) and assist the Government in regaining control of Sierra Leone's natural resources and key border areas, UNAMSIL would require up to 20,500 military personnel.

67. In this regard, I should also like to underline the particular responsibility of the Government to deploy its administration and to rebuild its institutions in the wake of the Mission's forward deployment. In my view, the forward deployment of UNAMSIL troops would serve little purpose if it is not followed up by the well-planned and well-executed extension of State authority and the gradual hand-over of security responsibilities to the country's armed forces and law enforcement agencies. These activities, which should start as early as possible and be pursued actively, would also enable the international community to consider adjusting its peacekeeping presence and to concentrate valuable resources on development,

humanitarian assistance and other vital activities. The establishment of security, the return of government officials, and the resumption of normal economic and social activities in the areas now controlled by RUF would also facilitate the return of Sierra Leonean refugees and internally displaced persons to their villages and towns of origin.

68. In this connection, I have decided to appoint Alan Doss as Deputy Special Representative in Sierra Leone, who would assume particular responsibilities for the coordination of the efforts of the international community to support and encourage the Government's efforts to extend and stabilize its authority throughout the country, including the preparation and conduct of elections in due course. Mr. Doss would also ensure a coherent approach by the United Nations in support of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. The new Deputy Special Representative, who had a distinguished career with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), will discharge those responsibilities concurrently with the functions of United Nations Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative and Humanitarian Coordinator.

VII. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

Status of the programme

69. Since the events in May 2000, a number of ex-combatants have continued to come forward for disarmament on an individual basis. Some 1,800 ex-combatants from the various factions, including about 600 of RUF, have thus been demobilized and entered into reintegration programmes. To date, a total of approximately 20,000 ex-combatants have been disarmed and demobilized, while about 7,500 have been disarmed but not demobilized. The latter category includes 6,900 ex-combatants who wished to re-enlist in the army and 600 child ex-combatants. Owing to the outbreak of hostilities in May 2000, about 3,500 ex-combatants of the 20,000 demobilized ex-combatants could not be properly discharged from the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. According to the Government, some 28,000 ex-combatants, including those who were re-armed during the May 2000 crisis, mainly RUF and Civil Defence Force, remain to be disarmed.

70. Late in February, a team comprising representatives of the World Bank, the United Nations and major donors held a series of discussions with government officials, United Nations agencies, and other stakeholders. The purpose of the discussions was to take stock of the progress made in implementing key recommendations of an independent review mission of September-October 2000. The findings of the team were generally positive. The Executive Secretariat of the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, in cooperation with UNAMSIL and other international partners, has since made major progress in streamlining and accelerating the management and operations of the programme.

71. In particular, the Government has processed and discharged about 1,600 ex-combatants who had remained in the demobilization centres, which has left those centres almost empty. As a result, the camp at Lungi was closed. The Executive Secretariat of the National Commission has also established a joint operations centre with UNAMSIL and has made several improvements to the processing of ex-combatants in the disarmament and demobilization stages of the programme. Operational plans for the resumption of the programme, as envisaged in the Abuja Agreement, have been put in place, including plans for the refurbishment of existing camps and the preparation of new demobilization centres. It is the Government's intention to keep the time spent by the ex-combatants at the demobilization centres as short as possible, with a maximum stay of up to two weeks.

72. A large quantity of the supplies needed for a fully-fledged resumption of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme have been procured. In addition, the World Food Programme (WFP) has committed a substantial amount of food to support the ongoing programme and has pre-positioned within the subregion a sufficient quantity of rice.

Reintegration

73. With regard to the crucial aspect of the reintegration of ex-combatants into Sierra Leonean society, the Government has made some progress, with the assistance of its international partners, in expanding the scope of existing reintegration programmes and in preparing reintegration opportunities for ex-combatants arriving in the communities. As a result, 6,853 ex-combatants have been involved in current reintegration projects and a capacity exists to enrol an additional

4,300 ex-combatants into reintegration projects that can soon be activated. There are however thousands of ex-combatants who have not reported to regional reintegration offices and whose whereabouts and activities are unknown. There exists a need, therefore, for an improved mechanism to track the movements of ex-combatants and to ensure that they make full use of the reintegration opportunities that exist for them.

74. Opportunities have also been created for the dependants of ex-combatants in the form of microcredits, of which 2,100 are in effect and 500 are awaiting implementation. Discussions are also under way with several international partners for the creation of 1,400 additional places for ex-combatants in the areas of agriculture, vocational training and small enterprise development, formal education and public works.

75. The current reintegration activities have been decentralized to better-staffed regional offices and, as much as possible, have been integrated with programmes designed to support internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups. The Government has also designed a dedicated programme of assistance for mid-level field commanders of the various armed groups, which should provide an incentive for them to disarm. UNICEF continues to play a leading role in the reintegration of child ex-combatants. There may be a need on the part of the Government to take additional measures to address the needs of ex-combatants' dependants and ensure a proper linkage between the activities of the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration and the National Commission for Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction.

76. Following further discussions between UNAMSIL and the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, major donors and the World Bank, a consensus emerged with regard to the contribution of UNAMSIL to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. As was indicated in my previous report, UNAMSIL is expected to assume a broader responsibility. This will be reflected in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process in a finalized joint operational plan, which should also describe clearly the roles to be played by other entities, including bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations.

77. According to this plan, UNAMSIL will continue to provide security at disarmament, demobilization and reintegration sites; receive, screen and process ex-combatants; collect and disable weapons and ammunition, including through mobile destruction facilities; transport ex-combatants from the reception centres to the demobilization centres; and transport, store and destroy the collected weapons.

78. UNAMSIL is taking measures to improve its training for military observers and other personnel engaged in the programme to increase its overall involvement and assistance in the management of the programme. In particular, the Mission's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration cell will be strengthened to ensure that all military and civilian aspects of the programme are fully integrated.

79. The main area of increased involvement by UNAMSIL would be the provision of enhanced managerial and coordination support at the demobilization sites. UNAMSIL military observers have assumed this responsibility de facto since the withdrawal in May 2000 of personnel contracted by the United Kingdom Department for International Development. I intend to strengthen this important function by adding to the camp management teams United Nations Volunteers, who would work in tandem with military observers to ensure the welfare of ex-combatants and coordinate other activities at the demobilization centres. In addition, the civil affairs component of UNAMSIL would be closely involved in the implementation of the reintegration aspects of the programme.

Outstanding issues

80. The improvements in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme brought about by the Government of Sierra Leone are considerable. However, several areas require additional attention. In particular, it would be important for the Government to determine the nature and modalities of the initial reintegration benefits for ex-combatants. While these benefits are likely to include a cash payment to allow ex-combatants to meet some of their immediate needs as they enter civilian life, it would be important to avoid the impression that the participation of ex-combatants in the programme is on the basis of "cash for weapons". Once a decision on reintegration benefits is taken, it should be widely disseminated through an effective and consistent information and

sensitization campaign. It is obvious that a clear and consistent message regarding reintegration benefits for ex-combatants and their families, which should also consistently be delivered in practice, could provide a strong incentive for disarmament. Similarly, the Government should indicate clearly what avenues are open to ex-combatants who wish to join the armed forces.

81. It would also be important for the Government to clarify the status of the Civil Defence Force. According to the Government's declared position, the Civil Defence Force may in due course be transformed into a volunteer territorial defence force. It should however be recalled that, in accordance with the Abuja Ceasefire Agreement, the Civil Defence Force should be disarmed and demobilized, both as a confidence-building measure and to help create the proper conditions for free and fair elections in the future. The creation of a volunteer territorial defence force should, in principle, take place in tandem with the military restructuring plan, according to which eligible civilians and demobilized members of the various armed groups would be able to join the national army.

82. In the meantime, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme has remained open to ex-combatants who wished to join on an individual basis, but many of them were unable to produce a weapon. Reportedly, many RUF weapons are centrally stored and their distribution is firmly controlled by field commanders. During the screening process, UNAMSIL requires therefore that ex-combatants provide credible support for their claim that they were combatants if they are unable to hand over a weapon. This flexibility will continue to apply on an exceptional basis. However, once UNAMSIL has deployed forward and the requisite disarmament, demobilization and reintegration facilities have been put in place in areas currently controlled by RUF, the programme should resume in an organized manner, with full cooperation by RUF, and with each ex-combatant handing over a weapon or entering the programme with several other ex-combatants with a crew-served weapon. This principle should also apply to the Civil Defence Force.

83. The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme is funded through the Government's budget, a World Bank loan, voluntary contributions to the Multi-Donor Trust Fund which is managed by the World Bank, and parallel funding from other international partners, in particular the United Kingdom Department for International Development, UNICEF and WFP. According to a World Bank estimate, sufficient funding would be available to cover disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations for an additional six months. The Government is in the process of revising its estimates for the overall costs of the programme, however, and it is highly likely that significant additional resources may be required, especially for the reintegration of ex-combatants. A donors' conference, to be organized by the Government and the World Bank, would therefore need to be convened in the short term.

VIII. Humanitarian aspects

84. Access to the areas under RUF control remained restricted except for a programme of immunization which was held over a four-day period in February and which reached children in all parts of the country. A second round of immunizations is planned for 16 and 17 March in RUF-controlled areas.

85. Talks have begun with RUF through various contact groups, including UNAMSIL and United Nations agency staff to seek access to RUF-controlled areas. Several international non-governmental organizations which are interested in expanding their programmes have also been in touch with RUF.

86. Thousands of Sierra Leoneans living in border areas close to the fighting in the Kambia district have fled to safer areas, mainly on the Lungi peninsula. There was a new influx of such displaced people following helicopter gunship attacks on villages at Yelibuya Island on 20 January 2001, when reportedly many houses were destroyed and at least 20 persons were killed or wounded.

87. The large numbers of displaced persons place an added burden on United Nations agencies and humanitarian non-governmental organizations. While many displaced people have been accommodated in host communities in the Lungi peninsula, others receive little if any assistance and some are living in unacceptable conditions. The influx of returnees, internally displaced persons and discharged ex-combatants to already crowded areas in Freetown and Kenema has also led to an increase in criminal activities.

88. The situation in Guinea has caused the movement of refugees and thousands of internally displaced persons both in Sierra Leone and in Guinea. UNHCR, together with the International Organization for Migration, has begun a programme of transporting many of the returnees by providing boats from Conakry to Freetown for up to 2,500 people a week to help avoid the danger of crossing borders controlled by rebel forces. Taking into account those refugees repatriated with the assistance of the Government of Sierra Leone since September 2000, the total number of refugees returned by boat to Freetown now stands at 40,000. UNCHR and its implementing partners have opened several new transit centres to screen and process returning refugees before they are sent to more permanent shelter in secure areas of the country.

89. The Government's resettlement programme is scheduled to begin by the end of March, at which time internally displaced persons currently living in camps will be moved to safe areas where they have chosen to be resettled with the assistance of a wide variety of humanitarian partners.

90. Staff of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs are working with United Nations agency representatives to prepare a regional consolidated appeal document to be presented to donors in March.

IX. Financial aspects

91. As indicated in my eighth report to the Security Council on UNAMSIL, the General Assembly, by its resolution 54/241 B of 15 June 2000, appropriated $476.7 million for the maintenance of UNAMSIL for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. That appropriation was based on a strength of 11,100 military personnel authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 1289 (2000). My revised budget for the maintenance of UNAMSIL for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001, incorporating its resource requirements for the same period already appropriated by the General Assembly, amounts to $562 million and reflects the Mission's increased strength of 13,000 military personnel authorized by the Council in its resolution 1299 (2000). Review of the revised budget has already been completed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and I expect the General Assembly to take action on it in March 2001 during the first part of its resumed fifty-fifth session.

92. Should the Security Council approve my recommendations set out below as to the further expansion of the Mission's military force and extension of the UNAMSIL mandate, respectively, I shall revert to the Advisory Committee and the General Assembly as appropriate with a request for additional resources to support deployment of additional contingents and their equipment. The financial implications of the expansion of UNAMSIL to a level of 17,500 military personnel will be issued shortly in an addendum to the present report.

93. As at 31 January 2001, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for UNAMSIL amounted to $259.1 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at the same date was $2,651.6 million. Contributions to the Trust Fund to support United Nations Peacekeeping-related efforts in Sierra Leone amounted to $2.3 million, with expenditure authorized in the amount of $1.4 million.

X. Observations and recommendations

94. While the situation in Sierra Leone has remained relatively stable since the signing of the Abuja Agreement, deep concerns remain about the continuing incursions and violence at the borders of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. I call upon the Governments of these countries to work closely with ECOWAS and the United Nations to bring an urgent end to the current crisis and create conditions for peace and human development in the subregion. In this connection, the ongoing efforts by regional leaders to facilitate a meeting of the Heads of State of the Mano River Union countries deserve the full support and encouragement of the international community.

95. It is imperative that the leaders of RUF and their principal backers stop any further incursions by RUF fighters and other armed elements across the borders of the subregion. This would bring much-needed stability to the volatile borders and facilitate efforts to assist and, where possible, repatriate the many refugees stranded there. UNAMSIL, within its mandate and available resources, would stand ready to provide the necessary assistance in this regard.

96. At the same time, the relative stability in Sierra Leone and direct contacts with RUF have enabled UNAMSIL to conduct the relief-in-place of the two large contingents and the rotation of other units, without abandoning any location where the Force had been deployed. Moreover, the Mission's contingents have managed to consolidate their positions in their areas of responsibility, thus setting the stage for the forward deployment of UNAMSIL.

97. The continuing reluctance of RUF to disarm and to allow the Government to extend its authority to areas held by the rebels remains a cause for deep concern and leaves serious doubts about their intentions. In particular, it would appear that so far RUF is ready to implement only those aspects of the Abuja Agreement that pose no threat to its military strength and to its exploitation of the natural resources of the country. Obviously, this position deepens considerably the reluctance on the part of the Government to engage RUF in a political dialogue and to create the confidence that is necessary for such a dialogue to bear fruit.

98. A key objective of the peace process in Sierra Leone remains to end, as soon as possible, the RUF rebellion, to extend the legitimate authority throughout the country, to disarm and demobilize combatants and also to allow the rebels to pursue political objectives in a democratic process. The two-track approach, which had been endorsed by the Security Council, continues to offer the best chances of achieving a durable peace through a combination of a strong military deterrent and a political dialogue between the parties to the Abuja Agreement.

99. The forward deployment of UNAMSIL in sufficient strength is an indispensable element in that approach and I recommend that the authorized strength of the Mission be increased to enable it to begin to discharge some of the tasks identified in Security Council resolution 1313 (2000). I also recommend that the current mandate of the Mission be extended for another six months, until 30 September 2001.

100. I am pleased to report to the Council that several Member States are giving serious consideration to providing additional troops and equipment to UNAMSIL, and I am hopeful that a significant number of military personnel can be deployed within the next six months. Such a deployment would bring the strength of UNAMSIL to a level of 17,500 troops. I intend to continue to seek further commitments from potential troop contributors and will keep the Security Council informed.

101. I should, however, emphasize that durable peace and stability in Sierra Leone cannot be achieved solely through the presence of a peacekeeping force. The Government of Sierra Leone has particular responsibility to pursue complementary efforts by restoring its authority and basic services throughout the country; rebuilding the capacity to provide security by national means and designing, implementing an effective demobilization and reintegration programme and ultimately, promoting national reconciliation. I once again urge all concerned to make full use of the security and stability prevailing in the areas where UNAMSIL is already deployed and to fully restore State administration and public services in these areas and simultaneously to be prepared to extend Government authority to the locations where UNAMSIL is expected to deploy soon.

102. While important headway has been made in the management and operations of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, there is still room for improvement, in particular with regard to the implementation of reintegration programmes for ex-combatants. Another crucial area would be to ensure the adoption of consistent procedures, incentives and benefits related to that programme, which should be effectively communicated to ex-combatants and the population at large.

103. While important, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme cannot be separated from the larger political context and the two-track approach adopted by the international community. It would be important therefore for the Government of Sierra Leone and all other parties involved to formulate more clearly their approaches to the peace process, in close coordination with ECOWAS and the United Nations. This includes a clearer picture of the possible future status of members of armed groups, as well as the impact of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and of the planned Special Court. This additional clarity concerning long-term approaches to the peace process would also be helpful to donors as they consider making financial contributions to peace efforts in Sierra Leone.

104. The current cessation of hostilities provides a unique opportunity for all parties to pursue confidence-

building measures and restore dialogue. In this regard, the decision by RUF to establish a political body in Freetown is a step in the right direction. I highly commend the Government of Sierra Leone for consenting to this — it is to be hoped — constructive RUF presence in the capital, which should facilitate the opening of a meaningful political dialogue.

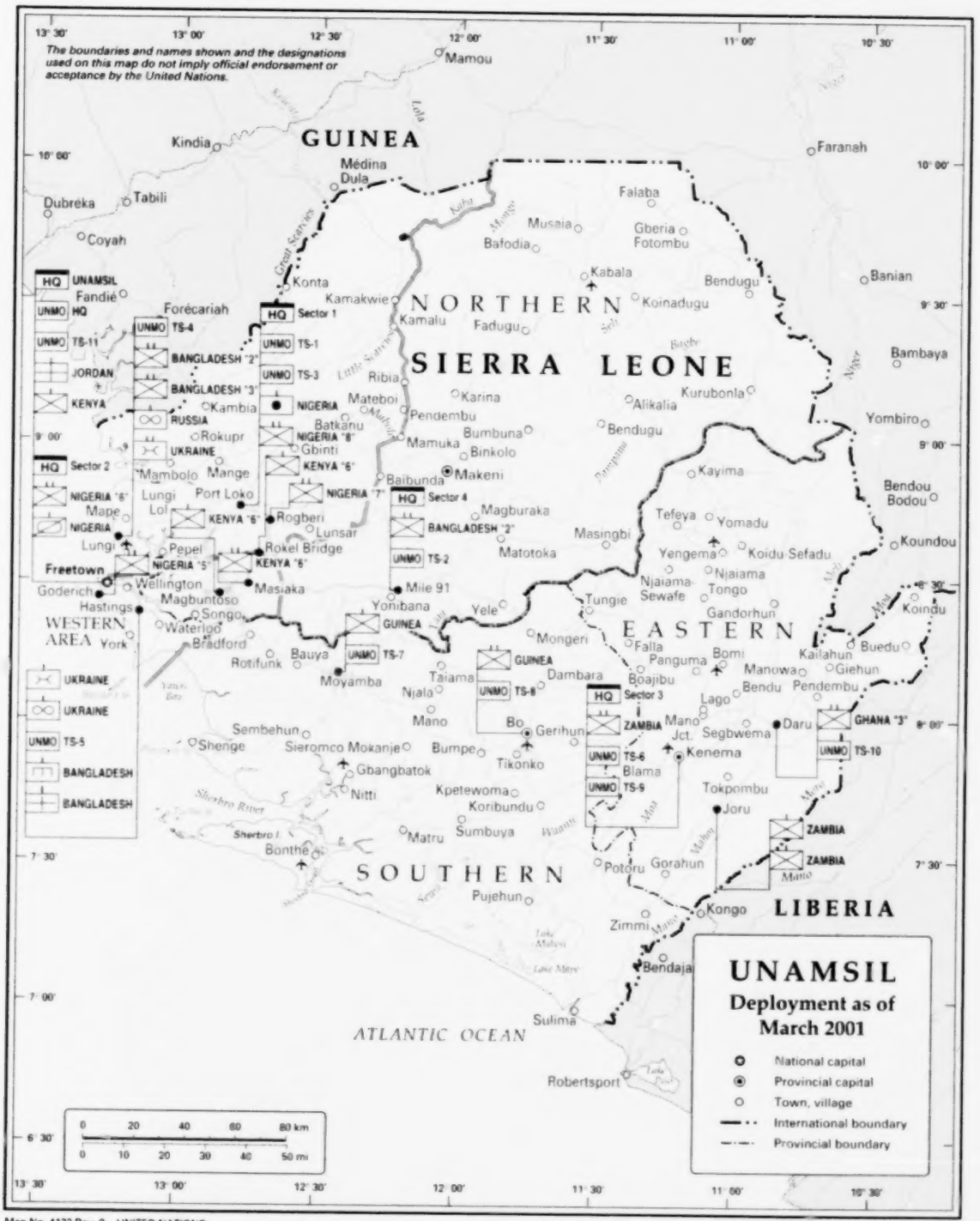
105. Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to all Member States that have contributed troops and police personnel to UNAMSIL, or have provided support in any other way, for their continuing commitment to the restoration of peace in Sierra Leone. In addition, I should like to pay tribute to my Special Representative, Oluyemi Adeniji, to all the men and women serving with UNAMSIL, as well as to the United Nations agencies in Sierra Leone for carrying out their task in very difficult and hazardous conditions.

Annex

United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone: contributions as at 14 March 2001

	Military observers	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Sector headquarters staff*	*Total*
Bangladesh	12	18	2 447	65	2 542
Bolivia	4				4
Canada	5				5
China	6				6
Croatia	10				10
Czech Republic	5				5
Denmark	2				2
Egypt	10				10
France	1				1
Gambia	26				26
Ghana	4	12	776	58	850
Guinea	12	3	773		788
Indonesia	10				10
Jordan	10	3	117		130
Kenya	11	19	995	65	1 090
Kyrgyzstan	2				2
Malaysia	10				10
Mali	8				8
Nepal	6				6
New Zealand	2				2
Nigeria	4	23	3 223	61	3 311
Pakistan	10				10
Russian Federation	15	4	106		125
Slovakia	2				2
Sweden	3				3
Thailand	5				5
Ukraine		5	546		551
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	20	8			28
United Republic of Tanzania	12				12
Uruguay	11				11
Zambia	11	3	773	4	791
Total	**249**	**98**	**9 756**	**253**	**10 356**

Civilian police: Bangladesh: 4; Gambia: 2; Ghana: 3; India: 1; Jordan: 3; Kenya: 3; Malaysia: 3; Nepal: 5; Norway: 2; Senegal: 5; Zimbabwe: 2. Total: 33.


The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
GUINEA
SIERRA LEONE
LIBERIA
NORTHERN
SOUTHERN
EASTERN
WESTERN AREA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Mamou
Kindia
Médina Dula
Faranah
Dubréka
Tabili
Coyah
Falaba
Musaia
Gberia Fotombu
Bafodia
Konta
Kamakwie
Kamalu
Fadugu
Kabala
Bendugu
Banian
Koinadugu
Bambaya
Fandié
Forécariah
Ribia
Karina
Alikalia
Kurubonla
Yombiro
Mateboi
Pendembu
Bumbuna
Binkolo
Mamuka
Batkanu
Gbinti
Kambia
Rokupr
Mambolo
Mange
Lungi
Port Loko
Lol
Rogberi
Lunsar
Rokel Bridge
Pepel
Mape
Freetown
Goderich
Hastings
Wellington
Magbuntoso
Songo
Waterloo
Bradford
York
Rotifunk
Bauya
Moyamba
Masiaka
Baibunda
Makeni
Magburaka
Matotoka
Mile 91
Yonibana
Taiama
Njala
Mano
Bo
Gerihun
Sembehun
Shenge
Sieromco
Mokanje
Gbangbatok
Nitti
Bumpe
Tikonko
Kpetewoma
Koribundu
Sumbuya
Matru
Bonthe
Pujehun
Potoru
Gorahun
Zimmi
Sulima
Robertsport
Kayima
Tefeya
Yomadu
Masingbi
Yengema
Koidu Sefadu
Njaiama Sewafe
Njaiama Tongo
Gandorhun
Koundou
Bendou Bodou
Koindu
Tungie
Yele
Mongeri
Falla
Panguma
Bomi
Kailahun
Buedu
Giehun
Manowa
Pendembu
Bendu
Lago
Boajibu
Dambara
Segbwema
Kenema
Blama
Tokpombu
Joru
Daru
Kongo
Bendaja
Lake Piso
Lake Mahyé
Lake Mitty
Sherbro River
Sherbro I.
Waanje
Mano
Moa
Makona
Kolenten
Yaleni
Bafi
Pampana
Seli
Little Scarcies
Great Scarcies
Kolente
Kolenten
Mafindo
Mafanta
Mabole
Mabang
Mabay
Mabesi
Mabai
Mabai
Mabai

United Nations S/2001/229

Security Council

Distr.: General
15 March 2001

Original: English

Letter dated 15 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

At a time when the Security Council is meeting to consider the report of the Secretary-General on the situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia, dated 7 March 2001 (S/2001/202), I wish to transmit, on instructions from my Government, this statement to you and, through you, to all the members of the Council.

Let me express, at the outset, my Government's deep gratitude to the Secretary-General for the undivided attention that he continues to devote to promoting a peaceful resolution of the conflict between my country and Ethiopia. I also wish to take this opportunity to renew my Government's gratitude to our partners in peace for their tireless efforts and, in particular, to all the countries that have contributed observers and troops to the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE).

My Government broadly concurs with the positive note, content and recommendations contained in the current report under consideration. We particularly welcome the Secretary-General's recommendations, in paragraph 53 of his report, for the extension of the mandate of UNMEE until 15 September 2001 and the inclusion of support to the Boundary Commission. I cannot help but appeal to the members of the Council for unanimous approval of these recommendations.

We recognize the enormous progress that UNMEE has achieved under the able leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. At the same time, it is evident that problems of varying magnitude are bound to crop up from time to time. It is very clear that we are confronted with a number of serious problems at the moment. But I wish to reassure you that my Government remains committed to respecting, fully and rigorously, all the agreements that it has signed. We are accordingly confident that all these problems can and will be resolved if the goodwill and seriousness of my Government is reciprocated by the other party.

Allow me now to highlight a number of points in the report before us that my Government feels have not been addressed adequately.

1. My Government fully agrees with the Secretary-General's characterization of the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) as "a critical first step to instil confidence, disengage troops and allow both Governments to arrange for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons and revive local economic life". These were precisely the reasons why my Government had been pushing all along for the early

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establishment of the TSZ in accordance with the Agreement of 18 June 2000 (S/2000/601). Unfortunately, because Ethiopia did not act in good faith and because it attempted to incorporate huge areas of sovereign Eritrean territory on which it had never set foot, there was a deadlock at the second meeting of the Military Coordination Commission in Nairobi last December. As a result, the United Nations brokered a compromise solution, following consultations with our partners in peace and the leaders of both countries. Eritrea accepted the proposal through a formal letter from Isaias Afwerki, President of the State of Eritrea, to the United Nations on 2 February 2001.

2. Thus, the proposal was not discussed, in any real sense, at the third meeting of the Military Coordination Commission on 6 February in Nairobi, since it was accepted by both parties at the highest levels. Eritrea accordingly takes exception to the statement in the report that insinuates a consensus at the Military Coordination Commission meeting for some adjustment of the TSZ "to take account of reservations expressed by both parties".

3. Eritrea did not receive any "larger scale operational map". The second TSZ map that was given to Eritrea on 14 February 2001 is in fact on the same scale, with the same amount of detail, as the map of the TSZ that was handed over the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to President Isaias on 30 January 2001. The second or substitute map, however, puts additional and large areas of sovereign Eritrean territory outside the TSZ and under the military occupation of Ethiopia for reasons we do not know. We have communicated to you, through our statement earlier (S/2001/204), the grave humanitarian implications of this alteration, which will not only prevent thousands of Eritreans from returning to their homes but also creates new displacements, particularly in the eastern and central sectors. Our findings reveal that 35,000 people in 33 villages live in those areas covering 224 square kilometres. I want to stress that UNMEE did not consult Eritrea on the substitute map.

4. UNMEE was duly informed of Eritrea's objections to these changes on 15 February 2001 by way of a letter to the UNMEE Force Commander from Eritrea's Commissioner on the Commission for Coordination with UNMEE, followed by another letter to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on 19 February. On 20 and 21 February, the Commissioner informed, verbally at separate meetings, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Force Commander, respectively, of Eritrea's decision to stop the rearrangement of troops that it had begun in good faith and according to the agreed schedule to underline the gravity of the situation. As the minutes of those meetings show, the Eritrean Commissioner informed the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General that "Eritrea is withholding implementation pending resolution of the complication created by the divergence between the original map we accepted and the substitute map now presented". The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General acknowledged the decision by responding, "I fully understand your position and will convey this to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General". The statement in the report, asserting that Eritrea informed UNMEE of its decision to stop rearrangement of its troops on 1 March 2001, is thus not accurate.

5. The sections of the report on human rights do not reflect fully the actual realities. Eritrea continues to abide by the provisions of the agreements it has signed while this is not the case with Ethiopia. Eritrea did not detain Ethiopian civilians.

Obviously though, there were a few thousands who were trapped as a result of Ethiopia's invasion last May and were compelled to stay in makeshift camps. All these have been assisted now to go back to their country with the involvement of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). But Ethiopia continues to detain Eritrean civilians in the notorious concentration camp of Dediesa and in six or so localities that were not declared before. ICRC reports show that there are more than 300 Eritreans kept in these camps at this moment. Ethiopia also continues to destroy homes and villages in an act of senseless vandalism in the occupied areas prior to withdrawals.

6. In regard to Eritrea's request for HIV/AIDS testing for UNMEE personnel, we wish to appeal to troop-contributing countries to understand our concern. Eritrea is at the moment engaged in a very rigorous national campaign to prevent the spread of AIDS. It has secured a soft loan of US$ 40 million for this specific purpose. This is moreover not a discriminatory practice targeted at UNMEE, but is a standard national practice that has been in effect since 1993. Routine testing of the Eritrean army is conducted as a matter of policy based on the recognition that the army is one of the most sexually active segments of the population.

7. Eritrea has informed UNMEE that it will cooperate fully and make available not only the detailed maps of planted landmines but also personnel involved in the exercise. The apparent misunderstanding arose on Ethiopia's demands for an exchange of the maps while still occupying the areas concerned. Eritrea's understandable position is legitimate sensitivity about the proposed exchange and the appropriate timing. In Eritrea's view, the provision of the maps can only be done after the redeployment of Ethiopian troops from the TSZ.

8. Ethiopia has challenged one of the Commissioners appointed by Eritrea to the Boundary Commission, Jan Paulsson. Mr. Paulsson meets all of the qualifications set forth in the Algiers Agreement of 12 December 2000 (S/2000/1183) regarding the standard for membership of the Boundary Commission. Ethiopia has based its challenges on unsupported — and flatly false — allegations that Mr. Paulsson was secretly a legal adviser to the Government of Eritrea with regard to the boundary dispute with Ethiopia. We have found Ethiopia's claim to be unreasonable and it will receive due response from our legal team. Eritrea has, in fact, more reasons to challenge the two Commissioners that Ethiopia appointed to the Compensation Commission because of their longstanding ties with the Government of Ethiopia. Indeed, one of them, Peter Malaczuk, is explicitly listed in his law firm's promotional literature as "Special Legal Adviser of the Government of Ethiopia in the war against Eritrea". Eritrea, from the outset, was reluctant to file such a challenge because of its hesitance to take any action that might delay the efficient working of the Compensation Commission.

I wish to conclude this statement by reiterating my Government's unwavering commitment to the implementation of the agreements it has signed.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present statement issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ahmed Tahir **Baduri**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2001/230

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 March 2001
English
Original: Arabic

Letter dated 14 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 13 March 2001 from Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq. Appended to the Minister's letter is a table showing violations of Iraq's international boundaries committed by United States and British warplanes flying across the demilitarized zone monitored by the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) in the period from 10 to 23 February 2001.

The Minister urges you to secure the necessary technical systems to enable UNIKOM to perform its functions in the manner required by its mandate under the relevant Security Council resolutions and to track and identify all of these violations and encroachments, which constitute wanton aggression against Iraq and against its people, its sovereignty and its territory and are incompatible with the relevant Security Council resolutions, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammed A. **Al-Douri**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 14 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to our letter dated 17 February 2001, I should like to inform you that United States and British warplanes committed 153 violations of Iraq's international boundaries by way of the demilitarized zone monitored by the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) in the period from 10 to 23 February 2001. On the basis of the table appended to this letter, the relevant Iraqi authorities have determined that the violations committed were as follows:

1. Armed and hostile aerial activity by the United States and the United Kingdom, violating our international boundaries from the demilitarized zone, comprised 153 sorties in the following governorates: Basrah, Muthanna, Baghdad, Maysan, Wasit and Dhi Qar.

2. Our technical systems identified the aircraft violating Iraq's airspace on an almost daily basis as American F-14s, F-15s, F-16s and F-18s and British Tornadoes.

3. All of the armed and hostile sorties that violated Iraq's airspace by way of the demilitarized zone received support from an AWACS aircraft operating inside Saudi Arabian airspace and an E-2C aircraft operating inside Kuwaiti airspace.

4. A total of 11 remotely piloted aircraft violated Iraq's airspace from Kuwait by way of the demilitarized zone between 10 and 23 February 2001.

All of the violations in question were committed by way of the demilitarized zone in which UNIKOM is stationed. One of UNIKOM's primary responsibilities is to monitor such hostile military operations and to report them and endeavour to halt them immediately.

The violations being committed by United States and British military aircraft, in which 10 to 20 of them are used daily, are tantamount to an undeclared war. It is imperative that the United Nations should take the measures that are required in their regard under the Charter, so that the aggression may be halted and those who have committed the violations may be charged with full international responsibility for them, including liability for payment of compensation to Iraq.

The statements of UNIKOM to the effect that it is unable to monitor or identify these aircraft cannot be maintained in the light of the scientific and technological capabilities that are available or that UNIKOM is in a position to obtain and utilize in order to fulfil the requirements of its mandate by establishing the identity and country of the warplanes that are violating Iraq's sovereign airspace and thence taking deterrent measures against the aggressors.

I accordingly urge you once more to instruct UNIKOM to perform all of its functions and report these violations to the Security Council through you, given that they constitute wanton aggression against Iraq and against its people, its sovereignty and its territory as well as against United Nations peacekeeping operations, and to alert the Security Council to its responsibility to halt the aggression and hold those who commit it responsible under international law.

(*Signed*) Tariq **Aziz**
Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs

Appendix

Hostile aerial activity violating Iraq's international boundaries from Kuwait, 10-23 February 2001

No	*Date*	*From*	*Time*	*Type*	*Sorties*	*Altitude (metres)*	*Speed (km h)*	*Areas overflown*
1	10-16 February	Kuwait	0750-2045	F-14, F-15, F-16, F-18, Tornado	88	10,000-11,000	720-780	Basrah, Amarah, Kut, Hayy, Qal'at Salih, Habbaniyah, Baghdad South, Salman
2	17-23 February	Kuwait	0950-1455	F-14, F-15, F-16	65 (including 5 drones)	10,000-11,000	720-780	Artawi, Safwan, Umm Qasr, Basrah, Faw, Qurnah, Nasiriyah, Busayyah, Jalibah, Rifa'i, Samawah

Total sorties: 153

United Nations S/2001/231

Security Council

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15 March 2001

Original: English

Letter dated 14 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In my capacity as Chairman of the Islamic Group at the United Nations, I have the honour to request the convening of an urgent meeting of the Security Council to examine the grave and deteriorating situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, resulting from Israel's repressive measures against the Palestinian people.

In so doing, the Islamic Group urges the Security Council to take the necessary measures as a matter of urgency, to provide protection to the Palestinian people by setting up a United Nations protection force to be deployed in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem.

(*Signed*) **Hasmy** Agam
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

01-28846 (E) 150301

United Nations S/2001/232

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 March 2001
English
Original: Arabic

Letter dated 14 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you of irresponsible statements recently made by officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran that clearly reveal the true state of affairs with respect to Iran's official position and its intentions, which are other than peaceful, in the context of its occupation since 1971 of three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates, namely the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa.

The United Arab Emirates condemns these statements, which have included, by way of example, that recently made to certain newspapers by Iran's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Kamal Kharrazi, to the effect that: "Iran's position is firm in its rejection of negotiations concerning the Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb islands, on the grounds that they are Iranian territory. As for Abu Musa island, there is a 1971 agreement between Iran and Sharjah on that subject." The Minister also defended the Iranian military installations that have been built on the Greater Tunb and the Lesser Tunb, saying: "This is our territory and we have the right to use it for any purpose whatever."

Likewise, the statements made a few days ago by the commander in chief of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, Major-General Rahim-Safavi, included the following: "The forces of the Guard, the Army and the Volunteers in Iran are monitoring all hostile military movements". In the course of the same remarks he also warned that "Iranian forces will cut off the hands of any aggressor who tries to encroach upon Iranian islands and shores", in a reference to the three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates that Iran is occupying.

Furthermore, in a statement by the National Security and Foreign Relations Committee of the Iranian Consultative Assembly it was stated that: "The islands are part of Iranian territory, and whoever tries to start a fire in the area will be the first to be burnt by it". This was in response to the final communiqué adopted by the Arab Parliament at its thirty-eighth session, held in Abu Dhabi in February 2001, which expressed firm and continuing support for the legitimate rights of the United Arab Emirates in seeking the return of three of its islands occupied by Iran, namely the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa.

The United Arab Emirates categorically rejects these irresponsible Iranian statements. They are indeed incompatible in substance with the declared policy of the Iranian Government, which advocates the peaceful resolution of differences, an

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end to the escalation of tension and the endeavour to promote confidence-building measures and peaceful coexistence between neighbouring States. The United Arab Emirates regards such statements as constituting an encroachment on its national sovereignty and territorial integrity and indeed as a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. It holds the Iranian Government responsible for any adverse consequences that may ensue from an escalation of propaganda that undermines peace, security and stability in the Arabian Gulf region and in the world as a whole.

The United Arab Emirates reaffirms its established position that the three islands in question, the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, which have been occupied by Iran since 1971, are an integral part of the national and territorial sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates. This is true regardless of how long the occupation may have lasted and is based on the historical and legal facts and evidence. The peaceful resolution of the dispute requires that the Islamic Republic of Iran should have the necessary political will and that it should respond to the peace initiatives announced by the State President, His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan (may God preserve him), which call for ending the Iranian occupation of our three islands by peaceful means through serious and genuine bilateral negotiations or by referring the issue to the International Court of Justice. We also reaffirm that the achievement of peace, security and stability in the Arabian Gulf region and the strengthening of bilateral relations in all areas between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Arab States, and in particular the States of the Gulf Cooperation Council, will require an end to the Iranian occupation of our three islands, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, respect for the national and territorial sovereignty of each State, the renunciation of the threat to use force in the resolution of disputes and the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, in the region in accordance with the relevant international principles, norms and conventions.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammad J. **Samhan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2001/233

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 March 2001

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Letter dated 16 March 2001 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

The members of the Security Council took note of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 50 and 53 of your report on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2001/202). Members of the Council share your views on the importance of the Boundary Commission to the successful implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). In order to make decisions on this matter, it would be useful to receive quantified and detailed proposals on the recommendations contained in your report.

The members of the Council would appreciate a response to this letter at your earliest convenience.

(*Signed*) Volodymyr **Yel'chenko**
President of the Security Council

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United Nations A/56/60–S/2001/234

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
16 March 2001

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General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session
Item 80 of the preliminary list*
Maintenance of international security — good-neighbourliness, stability and development in South-Eastern Europe

Security Council
Fifty-sixth year

Letter dated 15 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Agreement for delineation of the borderline between the Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia signed, on the margins of the Balkan Summit, held in Skopje on 23 February 2001, by Boris Trajkovski, President of the Republic of Macedonia, and Vojislav Kostunica, President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Agreement was concluded in the Macedonian and Serbian languages. A translation of the text of the Agreement is enclosed herewith (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under item 80 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Naste **Calovski**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/56/50.

01-29114 (E) 190301

Annex to the letter dated 15 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Agreement for the delineation of the borderline between the Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

The Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (hereinafter the contractual parties),

Starting with the Agreement for regulation and development of the relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, signed on 8 April 1996 in Belgrade,

Having in mind the mutual readiness and devotion to contribute to the development of good-neighbourly relations, security, stability and cooperation in the region and beyond,

Guided by the desire to conscientiously fulfil the obligations adopted in accordance with the United Nations declaration, respecting the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and peaceful resolution of conflicts, without threat or use of force,

Determined to confirm the borderline and prepare a written description of the borderline,

Have agreed on the following:

Article 1

The State border between the Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (hereinafter referred to as the State border) is a flat plane that cuts vertically across the surface of the earth and divides the territories of the two countries and their respective airspace and subterranean area.

Article 2

The State border between the Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia extends from the Macedonian-Yugoslav-Albanian border (border post 2092 — border stone D 24) to the Macedonian-Yugoslav-Bulgarian border (border post 1106).

Data pertaining to borderline are contained in the following border documents, which are an integral part of this agreement:[a]

- Textual description of the State border (annex 1);
- Topographic chart with a 1:25,000 scale (annex 2).

In the case of a disagreement between the textual description of the State border and the topographic chart, precedence will be given to the textual description of the border.

[a] The text of the annexes is available for consultation at the Permanent Missions of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations.

Article 3

The borderline of the Macedonian-Yugoslav border is marked with border signs.

Article 4

When the borderline crosses a waterway, the borderline will extend through the middle of the waterway basin. In the case of a natural or artificial modification of the waterway, the State border will remain at the place determined on the ground as the borderline prior to the modification.

Article 5

The contractual parties will establish a joint commission that will be responsible for executing the demarcation and delineation of the common border and will carry out the demarcation and the dissemination of border signs on the common State borderline on the ground within two years of the signing of this Agreement.

The joint commission will carry out the delineation and demarcation of the borderline as per article 3 of this Agreement and will compile border documentation that will describe the manner of demarcation of the common borderline and the location of the border signs (posts).

The joint commission will adopt rules of procedure for its work, instructions for the demarcation and delineation of the borderline, as well as technical instructions for preparing border documentation.

The border documentation will be executed in two original copies, one for each of the contractual sides.

In demarcating parts of the borderline described in the jointly agreed documentation, the joint commission will follow data documented in the land registers. Taking into consideration the local geographic, orographic and economic conditions as a whole, the joint commission will be able to make any necessary and balanced corrections, which may deviate up to 150 metres from the textual description of the borderline.

Article 6

The contractual parties will regulate by way of agreement the relations regarding the maintenance, renovation and demarcation of the borderline and border posts, the prevention and settlement of border incidents and the regulation of borderline communication and the transport of civilians, as well as the unimpeded use by the rightful legal owner of real estate property that will remain on the other side of the borderline.

Article 7

With regard to the cultural and historical monuments and memorials in the territory of both States, the Monastery St. Prohor Pcinski, the Serb military cemeteries and others, the contractual parties will conclude a special inter-State agreement that will determine the modalities of their renovation, maintenance and unimpeded access by the citizens of both countries.

Article 8

In agreement with international norms and national legislation, the contractual sides will provide for the care and protection of the environment in the border area.

Article 9

Any disputes in the interpretation and implementation of this Agreement will be settled by the Governments of the contractual parties by diplomatic means, i.e. by using all other available mechanisms of international law for dispute settlement.

Article 10

This Agreement is concluded for an indefinite term. Individual articles of the Agreement may be subject to change or modification only with the mutual consent of the contractual parties.

Article 11

This Agreement is subject to ratification in accordance with the legislation of the contractual sides and will be put into force on the thirtieth day following the second note by which the contractual sides inform themselves that conditions for the coming into force of the Agreement have been met.

Done on 23 February 2001 in Skopje in two original and equally valid copies, in the Macedonian and the Serbian languages.

For the Republic of Macedonia
(*Signed*) Boris Trajkovski

For the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
(*Signed*) Vojislav Kostunica

United Nations S/2001/235

Security Council

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16 March 2001

Original: English

Letter dated 16 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour in my capacity as Chairman of the Islamic Group at the United Nations to request that the Security Council extend an invitation to His Excellency Mr. Mokhtar Lamani, Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the United Nations, to participate in the Council's discussion on the agenda item "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question", without the right to vote, under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

(*Signed*) **Hasmy** Agam
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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United Nations S/2001/236

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 March 2001
English
Original: Arabic

Letter dated 15 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In my capacity as Chairman of the Arab Group for the month of March 2001, I have the honour to request that the Security Council address an invitation, in accordance with rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure, to Mr. Ali Ahmed Abbas, Deputy Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, to participate in Council deliberations on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

(*Signed*) Mohammed J. **Samhan**
Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations
Chairman of the Arab Group

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United Nations S/2001/237

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 March 2001

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in that country

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 1233 (1999) of 6 April 1999, by which the Council requested me to keep it regularly informed and to submit a report every 90 days on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS).

2. Members of the Council will recall that since my last report, of 29 September 2000 (S/2000/920), I addressed the Council on 29 November, in the context of the Council's open meeting to examine progress in, and constraints on, the post-conflict peace-building process in Guinea-Bissau. Following that meeting, it was agreed that my next report to the Council would be submitted at the end of March 2001.

3. In its presidential statement adopted on 29 November (S/PRST/2000/37), the Council stressed the importance of continued cooperation by all parties towards the consolidation of a sustainable peace in Guinea-Bissau and called upon the members of the former military junta to subordinate themselves fully to civilian institutions. It also reiterated that significant international assistance was indispensable in promoting the country's sustainable development.

4. The present report covers developments since that meeting, focusing on the efforts of the Government, in the wake of the failed coup d'état by the late leader of the former military junta, to preserve and strengthen the country's nascent democratic institutions in the face of persistent internal and external challenges. The report also highlights the role and activities of UNOGBIS in facilitating peace-building initiatives in the country.

II. Political developments

5. Although the direct challenge to the constitutional order by the military appears to have decreased noticeably, the overall situation in the country has grown more unstable.

6. In the political arena, frictions and disagreements within the coalition Government have intensified and resulted in a mass resignation from the Government, on 23 January 2000, of all members of the Guinea-Bissau Resistance (RGB), the coalition partner of the Party of Social Renewal (PRS) of President Kumba Yala. The subsequent appointment by President Yala of a minority PRS Cabinet has created further political uncertainty, since that party lacks the parliamentary majority to rule alone.

7. Following fighting between rival factions of the separatist Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) in the north-west of Guinea-Bissau, the Government, claiming the need to protect Guinea-Bissau's territorial integrity, launched a military offensive against MFDC. The ensuing armed confrontation has created a tense security situation in the border area and resulted in further heavy criticism of a Government already weakened by internal crisis.

8. Over the past several weeks, attention has been focused on President Yala's attempts to form a new coalition Government, following growing demands to replace Prime Minister N'Chama. Against the

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background of simmering ethnic and religious discontent, the authorities of Guinea-Bissau, on 18 February 2001, revealed that they had foiled another plot to assassinate President Yala.

9. Despite the troubling climate of tension, Guinea-Bissau continues with its efforts to consolidate its fragile democratization process. The National Assembly, which resumed its annual session on 28 February 2001, has focused its debates on the revision of the Constitution to bring it into line with the norms of a democratic society. To facilitate these debates, UNOGBIS, at the request of the Assembly, organized a seminar on the revision of the Constitution from 12 to 15 February 2001. The seminar, which brought together members of the National Assembly, representatives of political parties, civil society leaders and constitutional experts, generated dialogue on norms and principles of constitutions in multi-party systems, providing its 100 participants with the necessary expertise and advice on constitutional issues.

10. In another UNOGBIS initiative aimed at promoting the democratization process, in January 2001, participants attended a seminar on strengthening the multi-party character of democracy in Guinea-Bissau, which highlighted the principles and practices of a democratic society. At the close of the seminar, UNOGBIS donated computer systems to each of the 17 political parties that attended. Funds for the seminar and the equipment were provided by the Government of the Netherlands. An interactive seminar organized by UNOGBIS from 5 to 7 March with funding from Portugal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was designed to increase the awareness of Guinea-Bissau's media of their important role in promoting the consolidation of a democratic culture.

11. The authorities have stepped up preparations for municipal elections due to be held in June 2001. The National Assembly is preparing the necessary legislation, while the National Electoral Commission is reviewing the delineation of provincial electoral constituencies. Owing to its difficult financial situation, the Government plans to seek donor assistance for these elections. At the Government's request, the United Nations has provided the services of an electoral expert.

III. Military and security aspects

12. The situation along Guinea-Bissau's border with Senegal has become even more tense as MFDC fighters have increased their armed operations in pursuit of their rebellion in Casamance Province, Senegal. The movement's cross-border infiltration into the territory of Guinea-Bissau has often led to armed clashes with that country's forces, leading to heightened concerns that the provocations of the rebels are pulling Guinea-Bissau into the complex Casamance conflict. Furthermore, security officials in Bissau recently accused MFDC of involvement in a failed plot to assassinate President Yala and, in at least one instance, there was an exchange of gunfire between suspected MFDC rebels and security officers in Bissau.

13. The situation is further complicated by the presence in the border area of some 3,460 registered Casamance refugees, as there are concerns about possible links between some of them and the MFDC fighters. While a few of the Casamance refugees have voluntarily resettled in Ziguinchor, the capital of Casamance Province, the Government of Guinea-Bissau and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are exploring resettlement options for the rest of the refugees.

14. As to the Government's mine-clearance programme, an international non-governmental organization, HUMAID, has continued mine-clearing operations, facilitated by UNOGBIS and funded by the Governments of Australia, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, as well as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNICEF. Recently, following the demining of the Bra district of Bissau, mines removed from that area were detonated at a public ceremony. HUMAID, working in collaboration with the Government, civil society and volunteers, has also trained nationals of Guinea-Bissau in mine-clearing processes and continues its sensitization campaign among the civilian population.

15. Concerning the Programme of Demobilization, Reinsertion and Reintegration, the World Bank continues to provide technical and financial assistance to the Government through its economic rehabilitation and recovery credit. Definite progress has been achieved in several preparatory activities. The census of ex-combatants and paramilitary forces has been completed. The pilot demobilization project envisaged

for January 2001 has been postponed, however, owing to the delay in completing census data on the active armed forces. Military authorities attribute this delay to political instability and the volatile security situation in the north-west of the country, where MFDC is active. In the meantime, on 19 January 2001, 548 of 948 participants in the programme of voluntary demobilization, facilitated by UNOGBIS and funded by France and the Netherlands, were demobilized officially at a public ceremony. Until the pilot project, now scheduled for May 2001, begins, they will continue to receive food rations provided by the World Food Programme.

16. In the meantime, experts are finalizing arrangements and modalities for a civilian disarmament programme drawn up by UNOGBIS and other United Nations agencies represented on the ground. Donors for this project have been identified.

IV. Economic and social aspects

17. The economy of Guinea-Bissau is in dire straits. Guinea-Bissau's main bank is threatened with bankruptcy, the fishery industry is dominated by illegal fishing and basic food items remain out of reach of the average family. To make matters worse, this year's cashew crop, the main source of State revenues, is projected to be 50 per cent less than last year's, which further decreases the Government's revenues and its capacity to pay salaries and service the external debt.

18. Owing to the Government's continuing inability to meet the most basic social needs of the population, social discontent remains high and the level of unemployment and under-employment has reached troubling proportions. As a result, with poverty remaining widespread, there has been sustained labour unrest, including strikes over unpaid wages and allowances that have accrued since the pre-conflict period. In one recent incident three persons were shot by police during a student demonstration when its participants began damaging buildings and destroying government property.

19. Aware of the acute urgency of the problems confronting Guinea-Bissau, on 15 December 2000, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank agreed to support a comprehensive debt-reduction package for the country under the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. Total debt relief for Guinea-Bissau is worth about US$ 790 million in debt service relief, which is equivalent to 85 per cent of the net present value of Guinea-Bissau's debt.

20. A World Bank mission visited Bissau from 26 January to 9 February 2001 to assess the implementation of the economic rehabilitation and recovery credit. The mission also reviewed progress in the preparatory work for the poverty reduction strategy paper and discussed with the authorities of Guinea-Bissau the implementation of practical measures.

V. Human rights

21. Given the volatile political and security situation in the country following the November coup attempt, the Government's policy of promoting respect for human rights has encountered difficulties. After an initial tense period, the Government finally released the opposition leaders and their followers who had been arrested for alleged complicity in the coup attempt. Pending their trial, they are confined to Bissau.

22. The Government continues to experience a severe lack of resources and facilities to provide both security and appropriate conditions of detention for the 150 military officers still in detention, as well as about 108 MFDC rebels captured last November for supporting the late General Mane. In addition, 11 people were recently arrested for their involvement in the alleged February plot to assassinate the President. Seven of them were also charged with collaborating with MFDC rebels. Representatives of national and international human rights and civil society organizations have paid regular visits to detainees and called for the improvement of their conditions of detention. My Representative has also visited detention centres. In collaboration with the United Nations country team, UNOGBIS has intensified efforts to ameliorate conditions of detention through the provision of basic medical care by the United Nations doctor, water holes, medically treated mosquito nets and medical supplies.

23. Despite the ongoing instability, the Government ratified several human rights instruments, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In support of judicial reforms, the Minister of Justice, together with my Representative, undertook a nationwide tour of judicial establishments. UNOGBIS provided, where possible, computer systems to enhance the functional capability of the judiciary.

VI. Observations

24. Managing pressing post-crisis problems and building the foundations for a stable and functioning Government are some of the major challenges facing Guinea-Bissau.

25. The growing involvement of Guinea-Bissau in the MFDC factional fighting and the presence of Casamance refugees along the border with Senegal are causes of concern. In this connection, I wish to encourage the leaders of Guinea-Bissau and Senegal to continue their bilateral efforts to normalize the situation along their common border.

26. I urge all parties in Guinea-Bissau to engage in a constructive dialogue in order to defuse current domestic political tensions. Continuing instability could result not only in more hardship for the population but could also erode donors' confidence in the ability of the Government to manage the post-conflict transition effectively.

27. It is evident that the paucity of the country's national resources and poor infrastructure are major sources of rising social tensions. As the result of the November events and the ensuring tensions, preparations for the UNDP Round Table Conference had to be delayed. I therefore reiterate my call on the international community to provide urgent assistance to Guinea-Bissau without waiting for the Conference, so as to enable the Government to meet its pressing, short-term obligations.

28. In this connection, I commend the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for the flexibility they have displayed in providing post-recovery assistance to Guinea-Bissau. I hope that they will persevere in this direction.

29. I am grateful to those Member States that contributed through the UNOGBIS Trust Fund or through other means to the implementation of the projects outlined in this report. Their continuing assistance is critical during this difficult transitional period.

30. I also wish to thank my Representative, Samuel Nana-Sinkam, UNOGBIS staff and the entire United Nations country team for their dedication and commendable contributions to the cause of peace in Guinea-Bissau.

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Security Council

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Note verbale dated 16 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Permanent Mission of Zimbabwe to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the Security Council and has the honour to attach a copy of a letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Zimbabwe wishes to remind the Security Council that peacekeeping operations are an international obligation and, as such, should not be held hostage to bilateral relations between member States.

The Permanent Mission of Zimbabwe finds it disquieting that a permanent member of the Security Council which supported the adoption of Security Council resolution 1244 (1991) takes it upon itself to frustrate the implementation of that same resolution while maintaining that it is pursuing an ethical foreign policy.

The Permanent Mission of Zimbabwe requests the President of the Security Council to bring this matter to the attention of one of its members with a view to finding an amicable resolution of this problem, which, if ignored, could threaten the lives and efficiency of Zimbabwean civilian police officers deployed in the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

The Permanent Mission of Zimbabwe further requests that this letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 16 March 2001 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to bring the following to the latter's attention.

Following the adoption of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), Zimbabwe joined other peace-loving nations belonging to the United Nations in answering the call by the United Nations to contribute civilian police to the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to help bring peace to that troubled region. Along with others, the Zimbabwean police officers have, to the best of our knowledge, acquitted themselves well in their duties.

Unfortunately an unnecessary complication, which threatens Zimbabwe's positive contribution to good international effort and the lives of the Zimbabwean police officers, has arisen.

Since the deployment of the said officers in Kosovo, the appropriate authorities in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have constrained Zimbabwe's efforts to deliver arms and ammunition to its civilian police in Kosovo, because British Airways, the only airline flying to Kosovo, refuses to transport these vital items. The reason given for this stance is that it is consistent with the British Government's current policies on the Government of Zimbabwe.

The Government of Zimbabwe is of the view that United Nations peacekeeping operations should not be held hostage to bilateral relations between Member States. In this regard, therefore, it is the wish of the Government of Zimbabwe that the Secretary-General bring this matter to the attention of the relevant authorities at the United Nations with a view to its speedy resolution.